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Fiftieth Anniversary

Lockport

Mennonite Church

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1958

50TH ANNIVERSARY
LOCKPORT MENNONITE CHURCH

Stryker, Ohio

October 5, 1958

9:30 A. M.	Sunday School
10:30 A. M.	Worship Service
Moderator	Simon Stuckey
Devotion	Henry Wyse
Sermon	Simon Gingerich Wayland, Iowa

A Fellowship dinner will be held at noon.

2:00 P. M.	
Moderator	Jesse Short
Chorister	Freeman Aschliman
Devotions	D. Wyse Graber
Looking Back 50 Years at Lockport	Simon Stuckey
Two Songs arranged by Freeman Aschliman	
Lessons from the Past	D. A. Yoder Elkhart, Indiana

Sunday Evening

7:00 P. M.	
Moderator	P. L. Frey
Chorister	Raymond Short
7:10 P. M.	
Devotions	Floyd Schmucker
7:30 P. M.	
Looking Ahead in Building the Church	Dale Nofziger
Two Songs by the Lockport Quartet	
Offering	
8:20 P. M.	
Sermon - Hebrews 13:8	J. Irvin Lehman Lancaster, Pa.

FOREWORD

This history was prepared in cooperation with the ministry of the Lockport Mennonite Church, Walter Stuckey, Simon Stuckey, Maynard Wyse and Earl Stuckey. Information was obtained from their records and in consultation with them. Special recognition should be given Simon Stuckey who has been working on the Lockport Church history for an indefinite time. Recognition must be given to the Vesta Nafziger (Miller) article from the Christian Monitor, to the Samuel Horst files which contain a record of the work he, John Umble, and Guy F. Hersberger from Goshen, Indiana did in this community at a time when many of the older members who had personal contacts with the first settlers in German Township and west were still living. This coupled with my own interviews, research and recollections I hope will make interesting reading. We did not attempt to produce a literary gem nor a comprehensive history but a few facts each member of the Mennonite Churches of Fulton and Williams Counties should know. We have tried to be as accurate as time and human limitations allow at the present time. It is my hope that it will give the reader a better understanding of the church, her past, her present and help to make her a more spiritual and serving church with a message for the world in the future.

We have endeavored to eliminate much of the general information in the West Clinton history except facts necessary to convey the Lockport story.

We also wish to recognize the help of Marlene Beck and Ruth Ann Crossgrove in preparation of the manuscript for the publishing company.

Orland R. Grieser

LOCKPORT MENNONITE CHURCH HISTORY

General Early History

The history of the people that were to form the Lockport Mennonite congregation is very closely intertwined with that of the original German township settlement. Those who had settled in this area followed in but a few years that of the Lauber Hill area except for Peter Stuckey. Those from the western area spoke of the earlier group as "in the settlement". They themselves were spoken of as the "French Settlement". Not so much because they were of French background but rather their neighbors were. They were able to speak French because of living in the French area of the Alsace Lorraine. To their south and west were the French Lutherans. To the east were the French Catholics. They themselves were of German descent, and in the Anabaptist persecution of earlier days, they in all probability had left their homeland to settle in the Alsace Lorraine.

The first Amish settlement in this area was made in August of 1834 at Lauber Hill. A little later that same fall Peter Stuckey came to the west of what is now Fulton County looking for a place to raise his home and business in this new land. He had just come direct from France. He was a miller by trade so he sought a site on Bean Creek

where water power was available choosing the area that was the Benedict Aschliman farm. He was disappointed in this because some one had the water rights reserved further upstream at Lockport. When this mill was built is not known, but no records are found of people coming to Lockport for their flour from the Lauber Hill area.

Peter Stuckey was a widower. Some unmarried children accompanied him. A married son and several married daughters came later.

In 1836 there are records of Shorts (Schad) buying land to the east of Bean Creek. These brothers all had Stuckeys for wives having married in Europe. Peter Stuckey and family followed his father in three years, 1837. Records in Williams County list Klopfenstein, Aschlimans, Liechtys and others. To the north and east were the Eichers, Roths and Schmuckers.

It appears as if the first settlers in this section all came from one certain village in France.

To say that this group at the west end did not mingle with the rest of the Amish is wrong because there was and is much intermarriage and social contacts. But somehow one is conscious of the existence of strong ties for the home area. Many of the original names, however, pass from the roster of attendants at Lockport but not the Shorts and Stuckeys.

Some of the sons of the original Rufenachts and Becks bought land in this area a little further east in those early days.

In 1846 Peter Stuckey, the immigrant, dies and is buried on the north hill of the cemetery at Lockport. It was two years before a cemetery was deeded to the Amish Church.

In 1850, John F. Wyse came to Fulton County as a young man. On March 11, 1852, Christian Graber bought land on Bean Creek in Williams County. He had come from the Grabill-Hicksville area. According to some, they came in 1862 or 1863. In 1854, a Christian Short arrives from Lorraine, France with two children. Children were designated by "C" in the middle name; Joseph C., Christian C., and John C.

This area in all probability was a little like the other settlement as far as drainage, mosquitos and poverty, but the passing of the drainage laws of 1859 also helped the development of this area. Many of the bank barns and old houses attest to the growing prosperity of this time (1850). The effect of the schisms of the 1858 to 1868 period wasn't as pronounced in the Lockport area as on the West Clinton, Central and Lauber Hill area.

John Aschliman and Peter Schad are recorded as two of the early song leaders of the slow tunes.

The folk from this area attended church every two weeks in the homes of the brethren. Some times it was at the extreme west end at the Grabers. It was no easy ride to go in their wagons from one end of the settlement to the other. Some times when there was a sudden thaw during church they were compelled to leave their wagons and either walk, or ride their horses home because the mud was so sticky; it made it impossible to pull their wagons through the mud. (Especially if it was a "knoddle wagon" (Dummy wheel wagon). The people from this area have always had a progressive outlook. Of the eleven who were "Herald of Truth" subscribers in 1866, seven were western homes.

The Sunday School was started in 1871. On May 18, 1872, Christian Stuckey and Christian Freyenberger were ordained ministers in the Amish Mennonite Church. Finding in Peter Schad and others a kindred spirit of opposition to Sunday School, Christian Freyenberger held meetings in the Schad home. Because of this opposition, the Sunday School was closed. Two years later it was reopened again to continue ever since. It was closed during the winter months until 1886.

The Amish Ministers Conference "Deiner-Ver-Sammlung" was held at the Peter Schad "Wohn-Plaz" on June 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1876.

Until this time the church was small. With the coming of the Sunday School and with a little more lenient attitude on the "Ordnung" there came an awakening in the group.

In 1863 one young man had confessed Christ at 16 years of age.

In 1892 there was one unmarried young man in the church (John "Daniel" Short).

Soon after this time many began coming into the church. The majority were young married folks, some probably married for many years. The church frowned on having their children come too young. Hook and eyes, lotz hossa, muitza, beards and long hair and meitung and even one part singing and the German language are things which kept many of the young men out of the church.

In about 1895 or 1896 the first evening meeting was held. There were no lights in the church so people brought their lanterns. The church was growing by up to seventy additions per year doubling its membership from 265 in 1888 to 560 in 1910. By early 1900 there were Sunday School, evening meetings, evangelistic meetings and a little more leniency on the old Amish restrictions. It should be said that they were very strict to our present standards.

FIFTY YEARS AT LOCKPORT

In the first years of this century are the first clamorings for a meeting house at the "west end". This was no easy task. It took nearly eight years of labor to achieve this. The German Settlement was opposed to this because they wanted to keep the group together as one body. On December 8, 1907, Bishop Christian Stuckey dies without having provided a successor. In all probability this is the only time the church was without a resident bishop since the appointment of Christian Rupp before 1841. He had been a spiritual, loving and peace making leader. He filled the gap between the more progressive and ultra-conservative groups in both the ministry and the church.

In this period preacher Dan J. Wyse was the local minister in charge at the yearly business meeting. One large question at this meeting was the desire of the group from the "west end" for a meeting house in their area. It is thought by some that because a group didn't want this to be and because there was no way but to vote on the question this rider was attached that "if one was to be built west there would be one east". With this put to a vote, it carried.

W. O. Taylor in the Archbold Buckeye of January 10, 1908, says the following:

"At a meeting of the leaders of the Old Amish Mennonite Meeting House a most important decision was reached. It has long been known that the congregation was too large or else the old hive so dear to the hearts of hundreds of German citizens is too small for the ever growing audiences. Although the old church will seat seven hundred it is so crowded as to often be uncomfortable and on special occasions many are obliged to stand outside . . . one to be built at Lockport and one near Pettisville.

"The ministers of the Amish Mennonite Church receive no salaries. The expenses are light and although the members are the richest in the county the new meeting houses will be quite plain in accordance with the tastes and precepts of the congregation."

When this vote passed the folks were ready to act. Joe B. Short had purchased a parcel of land at Lockport a short time previously. On May 6 1908, for the sum of \$100.00, he sold four-fifths acre of this parcel to the church for the erection of a meeting house.



Lockport Mennonite Church
1908 to 1930

Lockport is the site of the second oldest village in Williams County, founded in 1832. It was situated three miles north of Stryker on the Tiffin River, in Brady Township. In its early history it looked as if it had prospects of becoming a large town, having a business section, homes were built and the land platted. There was a dam across the river and a mill was built on its banks. But this has all disappeared as other towns took its place in the business world.

The cemetery which is nearly 125 years old remains. Also the U.B. Church that was built in 1882 still opens its doors to worshippers. Funerals of early A. Mennontie residents in this area were held there.

Beside the Amish Mennonites in this area were the French Lutherans, French Baptists and a few Catholics.

In this place it was decided to build the new meeting house at the cross roads on the edge of the western part of the Amish Mennonite community and call the church "Lockport".

The April 17, 1908, Buckeye reports the foundation laid. By May 29, 1908, they were hauling plaster. The church was built by donated labor as a whole with Albert Vernier from Stryker as supervisor. Eight men are listed as paid laborers in the Amos Short records. The people had a mind to work because they wanted a meeting house. Taylor says, "Near the cemetery where many of their fathers are buried." Much of the material was donated. Lockport was built at the cost of \$2,897.40. Size 36 x 52. Elias L. Frey had been ordained bishop. A new era had come to the church and the beginning was marked by this expansion. It was three meeting places, one ministry, one congregation. By alternating the meetings the social ties of relationship and brotherhood were kept alive.

On August 23, 1908 the first meeting was held with Christian Freyenberger preaching. Eli Frey made the opening. Eight hundred fifty people were present with 161 rigs counted. All the ministers of the central or Fulton County congregation were present, Central being closed for the day. Ben Aschliman and Amos Graber were the first Sunday School superintendents. After this Central probably had church every Sunday until the first meeting in the new West Clinton Meeting House on November 15, 1908. Then began a period of alternating church and Sunday School.

In 1912 the south addition (straw-barn or tee) was built to the Central church, endeavoring to contain the bi-weekly crowds when the end houses were closed and all assembled at Central. This could not long satisfy the needs of the growing attendance and the wants of the brotherhood. On January 17, 1915 Lockport and Clinton began to meet alternately with Central in both forenoon and evening meetings.

On January 6, 1922, in members meeting at Central the following was decided: "Lockport is granted the privilege of having services and Sunday School every Sunday forenoon." This also included the evening meeting which by this time was Y.P.B.M., where as before it had been a sermon only. Sometimes as a special attraction a chart lesson was used. After this decision the only regular meetings that the Lockport attendants had with the rest of the church was the council meetings, the preparatory and communion service, etc. The young people had the "literary" which remained as one unit until just prior to the forming of separate congregations. The Sewings were divided later. This date is unknown, but before the 1944 forming of separate congregations. Some of the Evangelistic meetings were held at one place. Then again Bible Conferences were divided among the three meeting houses. Ministers used to rotate when there were three evangelists and meetings were held simultaneously at the three churches. There was always some social intermingling and also intermarriage. It was three meeting houses but one congregation. The funerals of Lockport's members were held at Lockport because of nearness to the cemetery.

Step by step the way was being paved for the forming of separate congregations. Finally it was baptismal services then preparatory services and communion services. The only remaining things that spoke of the "one congregation" was the one members meeting and the rotating ministry for the whole church. There had been strong feeling for hav-

ing a minister appointed for this church alone but somehow this never materialized until the church was divided by mutual agreement. This happened after the death of all the old ministry which occurred in about eight years time.

Going back to the building of the meeting house and before, there were some characteristics which belong to the people who make up the Lockport church. One was their socialability. This explains the prominence of nicknames in the community today. This was true both past and present. Some are hardly known by their given name from the first day of school until the obituary is read with the name given at birth. There was "Ugly Joe", "Lame Joe", "Hols-shu Ben", "Shaw Sam", "Sam Cracker" and others to the present day, many living but some have passed on. At Lockport it was Noah Eicher, Peter Graber and Jonas Rufenacht who sat back of the stove just enjoying the heat, C. F. Wyse with his light colored big rim hat and blonde beard, Lydia (Hans) Short with her white apron, and Joe B. Short who followed the minister word for word in a loud whisper as he lead in prayer. Many other familiar personages of the past could be mentioned.

The original building was remodeled and enlarged in 1930. C. F. Wyse was one of the leaders in this movement. The building committee, however, was church wide. This marked the beginning of the building program in this area.

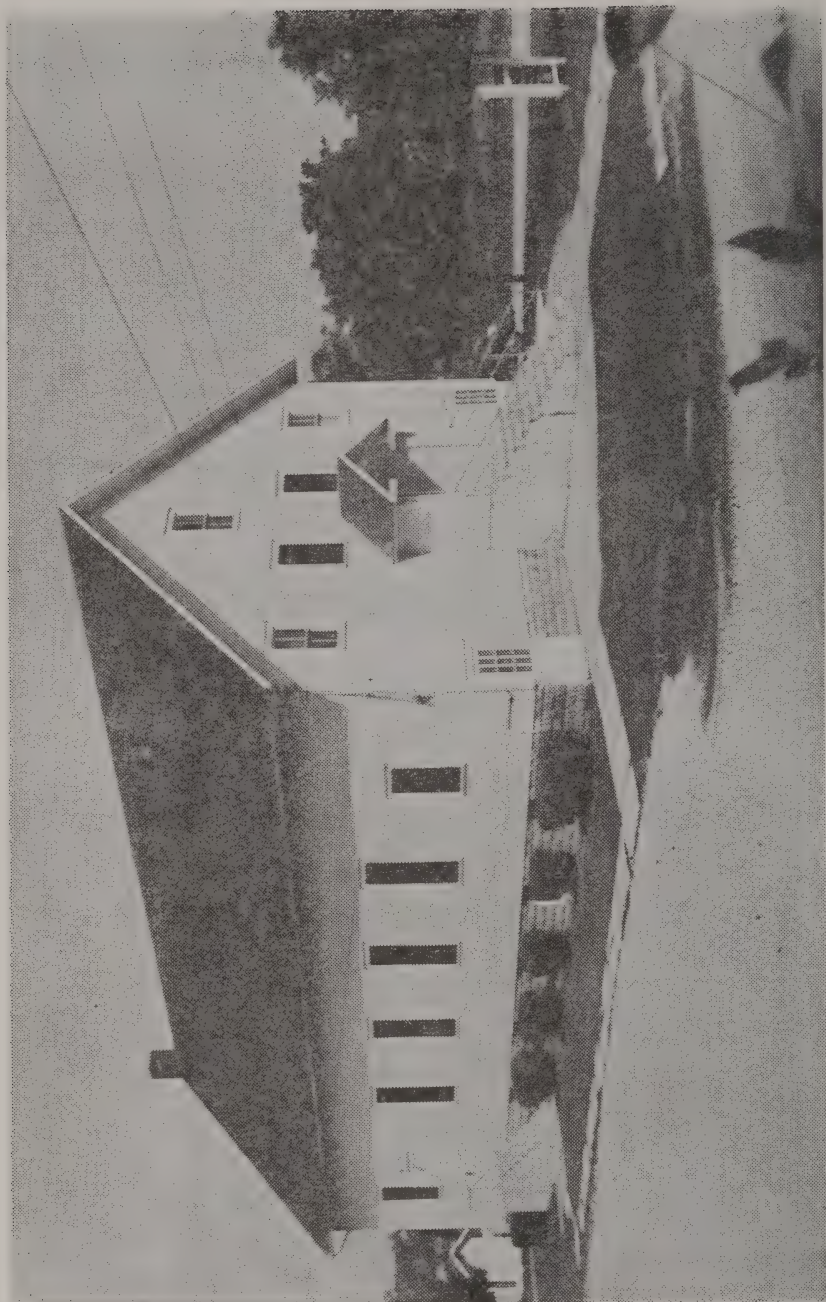
It was a little hard to convince the rest of the church that this should be done. They solicited their own members to start a building fund. In June, 1930, the work was started. The total cost was \$5,410.19. The building was increased to 36 x 70, including the addition of a balcony and basement and the installation of a central heating system. The building formerly had four rows of benches with a partition between to divide the sexes, the rostrum was to the east and on each side double doors led onto a porch that was across the front.

The next period is the depression years with its Winter Bible School, big results in revival meetings, the death of the old ministry, interest in missions increased by the going of Archie Graber to the African Mission field and Vesta Nafziger to India. Lockport supported P. A. Friesen for many years and later Lena Graber and others. In 1938 this church furnished one member on the first Missions Committee. In 1924 religious instruction was started in Stryker Schools and continues to this day.

On November 6, 1938, Simon Stuckey and Walter Stuckey were ordained to the ministry. This was the first ordination from the "west end". There was no special action after this for a separate congregation but the stage was set by the hand of God for the direction the church was to follow. After the death of Eli Frey in 1942, (who never wanted to see division in his day), things began to move quite rapidly.

On December 5, 1943, D. Wyse Graber was ordained deacon for Lockport. The other churches each ordained a deacon.

By 1944 the division had been fully effected. Walter Stuckey and Simon Stuckey went to Lockport with D. Wyse Graber as deacon and E. B. Frey as bishop.



Lockport Mennonite Church

1930 to 1958

From Southeast

HISTORY OF LOCKPORT

AS A SEPARATE CONGREGATION

The first separate members meeting was held November 1, 1944. The total number of members was 345. They continued interest in the Bancroft work. The church had become interested in the Lost Creek Church near Farmer, Ohio, in 1943. In the fall of 1949, D. Wyse Graber was put on the regular schedule for preaching appointments. At the same meeting the trustees were authorized to sign the papers necessary for opening the Oak Grove work. At the next members meeting the work of the ministry was again mentioned but no action was taken. At the following meeting on October 18, 1950, E. B. Frey placed emphasis on the need of a bishop ordination and the congregation was told to look forward to a meeting during the winter months. In January, 1951, Walter Stuckey was ordained as bishop. Meetings had been held at Oak Grove south of Stryker for several years. A new brick church—Pine Grove—was built in 1951. Then began the plan with which their fathers were so familiar, that of two meeting houses, one



Pine Grove Mennonite Church
1950-51 to 1952-53



Salem - Waldron, Michigan

Services held here from 1953

Purchased 1957

ministry and one congregation, but not for long. Pine Grove became a separate congregation with D. Wyse Graber resigning from the Lockport ministry to take charge. The work at Salem was begun. Maynard Wyse had been ordained deacon. Earl Stuckey was called to the ministry. The church became interested in other projects, many of which are listed in the calendar of events which follows.

This year this church celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the building of the first meeting house at Lockport. In the first thirty years, it seems little was done in comparison to the last fifteen. But those early fathers had a faith that caused them to live what they were taught and believed. They were willing to pay a cost that cannot be computed in dollars and cents. If they saw the church today, what would they say? Would they think that what she has lost was much more important than all her gains. Their practices were not of their own choosing but a result of a literal belief in the teachings of the Bible. The fact of being an Amish Mennonite often put them at variance with son or daughter or husband and wife.

They were laughed at because of some of practices which were literal practices of Bible teachings. It took surrender and yieldedness to live in that time just as it does to expand, to go, and to serve today. It is important to remember that these fifty years were to have been in the world but not of it. A mission to the world, but not like it. Fifty years in His name, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

LOCKPORT CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more complete General Information see West Clinton Calendar.

- 1834 Aug. 23, first Amish settlement in German Township at Lauber Hill.
- 1834 Peter Stuckey settles on Bean Creek.
- 1836 Daniel Short and Peter Short buy land (arrived direct from Lacote, Alsace, France) west of Archbold.
- 1837 Peter Stuckey, son of Peter, arrives.
- 1842 Peter Klopfenstein arrives.
- 1836 to 1842 Smuckers came.
- 1844 Joel Smucker arrives.
- 1852 Christian Graber buys land on Bean Creek.
- 1854 Peter Beck buys land west of Archbold.
- 1854 Christian Short, parent of Christian C., Joseph C. and John C. Short arrives.
- 1858 Passing of Drainage Laws (Bean Creek).
- 1862 Graber family came into Williams County from Harlan, Ind.
- 1865 People begin to subscribe to John F. Funk's paper "Herald of Truth".
- 1869 First Church House built.
- 1858 to 1868 Time of division in Amish Church.
- 1871 Sunday School started.
- 1871 Christian Freyenberger holds meetings at Peter Schad's because of opposition to Sunday School.
- 1871-72 Sunday School closed (at Central).
- 1890 (Approx.) First evening meeting by a sleeping preacher.
- 1895 Graveling of roads.
- 1896 Bass singing and buttons came into church.
- 1890-1900 Large groups of young folks and young married folks came into the church without evangelistic meetings.
- 1900 Time of Bible conferences.
- 1908 Decide to build two meeting houses (Jan.).
- 1908 E. L. Frey ordained bishop.
- 1908 May 27, buy 4/5 acre from Joe B. Short in Brady Twp., \$100.
- 1908 Amos Short calendar of building program follows.
- 1908 Feb. 8, began work for church—one man and team hauled plank away from mill.
- 1908 Feb. 24, one man and team hauled brick.
- 1908 March 26, one man and team hauled stone.
- 1908 March 30, set stakes for house.
- 1908 March 31, started foundation.
- 1908 April 16, put in tile and started carpenters.
- 1908 April 24, put up joist.
- 1908 April 27, helped build chimney.
- 1908 April 29, put up rafters.
- 1908 May 15, put in hitching posts.

- May 25, one man and team got tank and hauled water, started plasterers.
 May 28, waiting on plasterers.
 June 12, pulled posts and started men to put up hitching posts.
 June 15, one man and team filling up yard.
 June 30, carpenters started to finish church.
 Aug. 8, waiting on painters.
 Aug. 12, put down sidewalk and carpenters started to put down seats.
 Dec. 12, put up wall lamps and went to West Unity to buy outdoor lamp.
- 1908 Aug. 23, dedication. All ministers took part. 850 present.
 Aug. 30, Sunday School organized with Amos Graber and Ben Aeschliman; 240 people present.
 Nov. 15, first meeting at new West Clinton meeting house.
- 1911 Sept. 5, decide not to have recess or Sunday School at Communion.
 April 8, 24 ft. north of cemetery drive given to church by Louis Aultman.
- 1912 Build wing onto Central Church.
 Play parties are common in homes of members.
- 1914 Jan. 15, decide all morning meetings to begin at 9:30 a.m.
- 1915 Jan. 24, Lockport meets with Central while Clinton has Sunday School and church in their house.
 Carbide lights to be installed at Lockport.
- 1917 Many Lockport young men in the draft.
- 1920 Lockport decided to install electric lights.
- 1922 Young people's meeting held.
- 1922 Jan. 6, Lockport to have weekly services morning and evening.
- 1922 Amos Short, Gustav Stamm, Simon Stuckey first Y.P.B.M. program committee.
- 1924 Religious instruction starts in Stryker schools. Opening found by Amos Short; Eli Frey, first teacher.
- 1928 Expenses at Lockport for one year, \$207.20.
- 1929 Church gets new church hymnals.
- 1930 Jan. 1, C. F. Wyse appeals for more room at Lockport.
 Jan. 9, decide to rebuild with A. D. Frey, Levi Nofziger and C. F. Wyse as trustees; Gustav Stamm, Jonas S. Short, P. J. Short and D. A. Burkholder on building committee.
 Archie Graber goes to Belgium Congo Mission in Central Africa.
 Church sheds disappear from Lockport ground.
- 1931 Membership of the Amish Church—1081.
- 1931 April 11, communion at Lockport. May be the first time.
- 1935 Sept. 11, decide to paint name on the churches and not use the term "Amish Mennonite".
- 1935 Lockport helps rebuild Clinton church.
- 1936 Lockport helps build new Central church.

- 1938 Nov. 6, Walter and Simon Stuckey ordained to the ministry.
- 938 January, Lockport has member on Missions Committee.
- 1941 Church membership—1352.
- 1942 Third purchase of land by church from Menno Beck and wife, \$25.00.
- 1941 to
- 1946 Time of CPS. About 100 from whole church served.
- 1943 July 25, Spanish services at Lockport with David Alwine.
- 1943 Aug. 29, David Alwine held last meeting with migrants.
- 1943 Dec 5, Wyse Graber ordained deacon for Lockport.
- 1944 Nov. 1, Lockport holds first separate members meeting.
- 1944 Nov. 1, membership at Lockport—345.
- 1944 March 8, Harvey Schmucker asked to establish a Sunday School wherever he thought advisable.
- 1946 Summer Bible Schools organized.
- 1946 July 31, Lockport appoints one member of Building Committee for Bancroft Church.
- 1948 Held yearly meeting at County Home.
- 1949 At fall members meeting it was suggested to allow more time for one who had married outside the fellowship of the church.
- 1949 (Fall) Church votes to change Sunday School reorganization dates to October and April instead of January and June.
- 1949 Wyse Graber, deacon, put on a regular schedule of preaching appointments on a temporary arrangement.
- 1949 Trustees authorized to sign the Oak Grove papers necessary to begin work.
- Dec. 11, Freeman Aschliman ordained minister for West Bancroft.
- 1950 Jan. 7, Junior Sewing organized.
- 1951 Sept. 26, it was decided by ballot vote to have individual communion cups at the time the ordination of Wyse Graber to the ministry was considered.
- 1951 Dec. 30, Wyse Graber was ordained minister.
- 1951 Dec. 30, Maynard Wyse was ordained deacon.
- 1952 Sept. 16, a meeting was held at Pine Grove in which separate congregational status was considered. This was brought before the mother church which decided to answer in a month.
- 1952 Oct. 21, Lockport and Pine Grove met relative to Pine Grove becoming a separate congregation.
- 1953 Canning committee organized.
- 1953 Summer Bible School held at Salem.
- 1953 July 29, (Pine Grove) D. Wyse Graber chosen as pastor of Pine Grove.
- 1953 Sept. 16, accept the Salem Waldron, Michigan work for one year.
- Sept. 16, D. Wyse Graber resigns as minister at Lockport to accept call from Pine Grove.

- 1953 Oct., Lockport decides to participate in disaster work.
The work at Salem had been started.
- 1954 Jan. 1, bulletins to be used on trial basis for a month.
- 1954 March 30, decide to have church bulletins.
- 1954 Salem work continued on yearly basis.
- 1954 Oct. 20, there is mention of a church building and fellowship
hall which is to be discussed at New Years.
- 1954 Nov. 1, Maynard Wyse opens book store in their home.
Earl Stuckey ordained minister.
- 1954 Decided to procure operating expenses by taking \$50.00 out
of weekly offerings.
- 1955 Food Committee organized.
- 1955 Begin to hold services and pass out gospel literature in Bryan
and Montpelier Hospital, Nursing Homes and Jails.
- 1955 May 17, meeting to discuss plans for a fellowship hall.
- 1956 Jan. 2, suggest use of memorial cards and decided to put pic-
ture in front of church.
- 1956 Sept. 12, Fellowship building completed at cost of \$15,000.00.
- 1957 Jan. 1, decide to continue support of Pauline Reesor.
- 1957 Jan. 1, to give program at Fort Wayne Rescue Mission once
a month.
- 1957 Jan. 1, decide to cooperate with General Mission board in the
Spanish work in Defiance County.
- 1957 Jan. 1, decide to have common treasury for all organization of
the church on trial basis.
- 1957 Jan. 1, families encouraged to sit together during worship
services.
- 1957 May 1, decide to purchase the Salem building at Waldron,
Michigan.
- 1958 Jan. 1, decide to have more than one treasury. Hold regular
New Years day business meeting for elections and reports.
- 1958 Aug. 23, fifty years ago first meeting.
- 1958 Aug. 30, fifty years ago first Sunday School at Lockport.
- 1958 Oct. 5, fiftieth anniversary meeting with Irvin Lehman, D. A.
Yoder and Simon Gingerich as guest speakers.

LOCKPORT MINISTERIAL RECORD

Walter Stuckey M Nov. 6, 1938 at Central
B Jan. 26, 1951

Simon Stuckey M Nov. 6, 1938 at Central

D. Wyse Graber D Dec. 5, 1943
M Dec. 30, 1951

Sept. 16, 1953, resigned to accept Pine Grove pastorate

Maynard Wyse D Dec. 30, 1951

Earl Stuckey M Jan. 16, 1955

50TH ANNIVERSARY
WEST CLINTON MENNONITE CHURCH
Pettisville, Ohio

1908

October 5, 1958

1958

MORNING SERVICE

9:30	Sunday School
10:30	Worship Service
Message	J. Irvin Lehman
	Lancaster, Pa.

AFTERNOON SERVICE

2:00 P. M.

Moderator	P. L. Frey
Chorister	Dale Grieser
Early Experiences in Church and Sunday School at West Clinton	Aaron Frey
Special Music arranged by Dale Grieser	
Lessons from the Past	Simon Gingerich Wayland, Iowa

EVENING SERVICE

7:00 P. M.

Moderator	William Nofziger
Chorister	Dale Grieser
Devotion	Henry Wyse
Looking Ahead in Building the Church	E. B. Frey
Jesus Christ the Same—Heb. 13:8	D. A. Yoder Elkhart, Ind.

HISTORY OF WEST CLINTON MENNONITE CHURCH

Early General History

In 1834 the land in German Township and surrounding area was opened for settlement. Two Amish groups of three families each came from upper Alsace and Switzerland in two different ships arriving in New York in June of the same year. They journeyed up the Hudson River, Erie Canal, Lake Erie and by canal to Canal Fulton in Stark County where they were met by Amish brethren from Wayne County.

A group was sent to look for a place to settle with Peter Wyse from Wayne County as guide and interpreter. After a big circle through the wilderness on foot, they came into the Lauber Hill area what is now German Township. They entered eight hundred acres of land in that general area.

The Bender, Meister, VanGundy, Lauber and Kibler families were the first five families to come arriving August 23rd. The Christian Rupp family, though of the two original groups, came later.

Simultaneously a Stuckey family settled on Bean Creek. The Christian Beck family also came the same fall according to some authorities.

The next fifteen years was marked by the coming of the following families to this general area: two Wysees, two Kings, Rufenacht, Roth, three or more Nofzigers, Grieser, Sauder, Rychener, Burkholder, Schantz, Rupp and Stutzman. Then farther west were the Shorts, Klopfensteins, Aeschlimans, Eichers and others (French Settlement). To the east and south were the Freys, Freyenbergers, Lantzes and others.

In the fall of 1835 the first church service was held in the Christian Lauber 20 x 24 cabin with Christian Beck, a minister ordained in Switzerland, in charge.

It was no easy task to subdue the wilderness, which was practically a swamp with its accompanying malaria, ague and mosquitoes. The connection with the outside world was by slow travel on trails, not always passable. It was 1850 before the plank road to Maumee reached Delta. By the early fifties they were building substantial houses and barns. The church had been established. Other ministers had been chosen. First Bishop, Christian Rupp, of the two original parties was probably ordained in Wayne Co.

From 1858 to 1868 there were three divisions in the church. The first being when John Holdeman, a Mennonite minister from Medina Co., came into the community telling the people they weren't converted, stressing new birth and experience.

Not much is known of the Reformed Mennonite group except that a Jacob Binder was their leader. There is a land transfer to the New Mennonite Church in Dec. 1865. They stressed a more rigid keeping of the old forms.

The third was the group that followed Jacob Rupp of their own number and was organized by Henry Egli with other groups into a church that was to become the Defenseless Mennonite Church.

In the Amish Mennonite Church, meetings were held every two weeks in houses or barns. The church service was long and often dismissed at two o'clock or later. The deacon read a chapter and led the congregation in a long prayer. The minister for the day explained this chapter verse by verse and according to some read the next chapter and

explained this also. Then each of the ministers present gave testimony to the sermon. Singing consisted of long, slow, one-part hymns from the Ausbund.

In 1858 the land for the Eckley Cemetery was bought. Earlier in 1848 Peter Wyse had deeded the land for the Wyse Cemetery to the Ammisch Church. December 25, 1869 is the date of the deed for the Central Church property, although from reliable sources the church was nearly completed by this time. In 1886 more land was sold to the Central Church in this year or the next the west end was extended and the pulpit was moved to the north side. Earlier it was to the west. Church services were held bi-weekly and if the roads were impassable not that often.

In 1871 a Sunday school was started with Jephtha Wyse and Jacob Nofziger in charge. Jephtha Wyse had visited a brother in Iowa and had become favorably impressed with their Sunday school. Because of opposition it was discontinued for several years. It was started again in 1873 with the ministers in charge. The fact that Amish children were attending other Sunday schools in the community was one factor that caused the Amish Brethren to re-open their Sunday school. Eli and Jacob Frey had attended one of these community Sunday schools.

Eli L. Frey first introduced English by consent of the bishop into a class of boys whose attention it was impossible to hold. In 1881 Eli Frey and Christian Grieser, the first lay Sunday school superintendents, were appointed by the ministry. Jacob C. Frey was one of the Sunday school superintendents during the language transition period centering around 1895.

The year 1900 marks the mid-point in our history as a church and a community. During the latter part of the 19th century the Church, having 560 communicant members in 1895, had been under the leadership of Christian Stuckey who was a man of spiritual attainment and did much to hold the group together. Another leader of that time was Christian Freyenberger, a man of ability and more conservative than Stuckey. At the beginning of the 20th century or 1900, the ministry of these two men was almost over and other influences were beginning to be felt. E. L. Frey who had been ordained deacon in 1884 was emerging as the leader of the church during the next period. But other influences were having their effect. It seems that the first evening meeting was held about 1900, people coming to church with lanterns. The Sunday school was evergreen by this time; that is, Sunday school was held every Sunday, summer and winter. Many of the roads had been graveled by 1900. Four-part singing was coming in about this time also. By 1903 they were having evangelistic meetings with D. D. Miller of Indiana as speaker. Seventy converts came out in those meetings. A Sewing Circle was also organized in 1903.

About this time there was a relaxing of the more strict rules of the former generation in dress and other things and in the observance of the practice of shunning (meitung ger), many beginning to believe that it applied to the communion and not to everyday living. Also the shift to the English language was progressing quite rapidly. All these changes had their effect. Formerly few joined the Church before they were married. Now younger people were coming into the Church. Bible Conference with meetings in the forenoon and evening were being held. (Remember those chart lessons?) This type of meeting continued for a long time with such men as D. D. Miller, D. H. Bender, D. J. Johns,

S. G. Shetler, Daniel Kauffman and others as speakers. These meetings had a profound influence on the Church and hastened a trend which had already begun, namely, the emphasis on the Grace of God and salvation a free gift by faith and not so much on the externals of religion. By the year 1908 the Church was ready for a momentous step. Several families were living on the other side of Bean Creek to the west and some were living in the western end of Clinton Township to the east, the English settlement as it was called. Therefore, they decided to build two other meeting houses, Lockport and Clinton, West end and East end as they were called.

Fifty Years At West Clinton

West Clinton, a building 36 x 52, was built by D. W. Nofziger with some of the Mennonite young men helping at a cost of \$2660.72 on land purchased from E. L. Frey on the northeast corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 6, Clinton Township, one mile east of the German Township line.

The original meeting house stood same as the present one. To the east across the entire front was a porch with two sets of double doors one on each side of the pulpit. The main exits were to the front, the sisters sat on the north side and the brethren on the south. There was a low partition that ran down the center of the auditorium with the exception of the back bench, dividing the two sexes. There were two rows of benches in each section, one against the partition (which explains why some of the old benches in the basement have no ends) and the other against the outside wall with aisles between. The outside rows of benches were broken by the stoves in the approximate center. There were hooks in this area for hats or bonnets and coats as was also in the front area where the benches were turned to face the pulpit. There was a space in this area for chairs, too. (Here the janitor, Henry Rupp, had his chair from which to get a view of the wants of the worshippers.) In the rear of the building were two ante-rooms where there was more clothes storage and a water pail and dipper from which was quenched the thirst of the babies and children who had tired during the service. From these ante-rooms there were side doors. The door to the south led to the sheds and hitching rails and later parked cars. The door to the north led to a loading area, although the main one was to the front.

This area was a very popular place on Sunday nights when the young men walked around outside of the church where there was no dividing partition for a look at who was there or who went with whom. No one today can guess what were the results of those Sunday evening contacts, no doubt, mostly for the good.

The south ante-room was the place where the first primary SS class was held for the boys and girls. There was an age range of over five years in this class.

In the main auditorium the seating arrangement was practically the same as at the present with the youngest in the center front and the oldest to the right and left front, the aisle separating the young people from the adults.

At the time of building West Clinton and Lockport churches there were about a dozen families living east of the building site. This step did not mean separation, rather there was to be one congregation with three meeting places and one ministry. In this year E. L. Frey was ordained bishop and two years later his brother, J. C. Frey, was ordained

deacon. These two men, together with a ministry who worked faithfully with them, guided and served the Church for years.

Going back to 1908 there were 47 families going to Lockport. At this same time the families attending West Clinton included: Henry L. and Henry H. Rupp, Eli and J. C. Frey, Christ and Sam Beck, Levi, John and Dan Beck, Christ Freyenberger, Dan, Dave, and Amos Burkholder, Dan King, Jacob and Jeff Nofziger, John Miller, Conrad Britsch, Noah Kauffman, Albert Wyse, Abe Yoder and others. As more young people began to buy farms farther east, they filled the vacancies left by those who attended Central when the regular weekly services were again held there.

Sunday schools were organized separately at each place, that is, there were three Sunday school organizations but only one congregation. For a time services were held on alternate Sundays at the end houses as they were called and the next Sunday everyone went to Central. This continued for a time when Central began having services every Sunday. For some time after this, services were still held every other Sunday at West Clinton and on alternate Sundays at Lockport. It seems that about 1922, Lockport began having services every Sunday but West Clinton continued on an every other Sunday schedule. The church continued to grow and in 1912 an addition was made to Central Church. With the bi-weekly trips to Central the ties were kept strong. The monthly members meetings were held after the regular church services at Central with the children going out to play either in front of the church or among the many rows of sheds. Not to be forgotten is the sight of the ministers filing out of the Council Room where they had been during the SS hour. About this time it was decided not to have Sunday school or a recess for dinner on Communion Sunday so that the service would not be so late; it often went until one o'clock. Another step was the putting in of carbide lights about the year 1915. During the period of the first World War, the Church faced a number of new problems such as the buying of War Bonds and what position to take regarding service in the Army. Most of the young men took the C. O. position and had a much more difficult time than the young men today. The problem was new to our government and to the Church since there hadn't been a major war for over fifty years.

By 1920 there were almost 900 members, one congregation, three Sundays schools, three meeting places, one ministry with each minister scheduled for a different place every Sunday. About 1923 we began having Y.P.B.M. alternating with Central. Lockport was the first of the End Houses to have Y.P.B.M. every Sunday evening. Henry Richer, A. D. Frey and E. B. Frey served on the first Y.P.B.M. program committee for West Clinton. Another step in separation was when baptismal services were held at the end houses; this began in 1927 or 1928.

In 1933 we began another period in the history of the Church. In that year E. B. Frey was ordained bishop to assist the aging E. L. Frey. S. S. Wyse was made a minister and Henry Wyse deacon. This was also the period of the Winter Bible Schools held at Central which many of us enjoyed and appreciated. S. G. Shetler, J. Irvin Lehman and D. A. Yoder are especially remembered from that time. The Church was growing now, having a membership of over 1,000. The old houses were getting too small and so a period of building began in the middle of the great depression of the 30's. In 1930 Lockport was rebuilt. In 1935

Clinton was enlarged. The next year the new Central Church was built.



About this time three separate Sewing Circles were organized so we were moving toward a breaking up into separate congregations. Another step in that direction was when Walter and Simon Stuckey were ordained to the ministry in 1938. They were the first of the ministry to come from the West End in a long time. The first really definite step was when in 1943 and 1944 Wyse Graber was ordained deacon for the Lockport Church, Roy Sauder for the Central Church and Olen Nofziger for the West Clinton Church. After that, progress was quite rapid and the church divided into three separate congregations with one bishop, E. B. Frey, in the area. The first business and council meeting for West Clinton was held January 1, 1945.

We shall turn to another phase in the development of the Church, namely, the interest in Missions. During the first quarter of the century little was done but gradually there came about an awakening. Vesta Nafziger Miller was called to the Mission Field in India and left in 1938. The West Clinton congregation still contributes to her and Elaine's support. Then we had a joint Mission Committee being appointed in 1939 charged with looking for a suitable place to begin work. The Bancroft work is a result of this effort and is to some extent supported by the three main congregations to this time. Out of this also came the Holland work which was begun in 1945 and is operated and supported by the West Clinton congregation. The interest in Missions has kept up through the years with other workers such as Carl and Esther Beck, Mildred Mehl Nofziger, Lois Gisel Leidig, Chauncy and Ilva Grieser, Cora and Viola Baer and Ruth Frey Shank serving or

have served on the mission field at home or abroad. This does not mention the many who have given service at Springfield Chapel, Bancroft,



the Mount Pleasant Cong. at Continental and the Jewish effort at Toledo.

The Sister Congregations have had similar growth and expansion. The latest venture in expansion has been the North Clinton Church. When it was decided to expand facilities at Holland in 1951, it was decided not to enlarge at West Clinton. After several years of survey, discussion and work by trustees and Mission Committees, it was decided to build a new church to the northwest of Wauseon. This building was dedicated on May 26, 1957. After a short time of alternating and an interim organization, it finally was decided to form two separate congregations with approximately two thirds of the members remaining at West Clinton and one third going to North Clinton. So today, there are two congregations. 1958 marks fifty years at West Clinton. Many have attended here. Some have answered the heavenly summons. Some have been called to other places and churches. Some have not heeded the call of Christ. So the West Clinton Church must continue to preach the Word.

The foregoing sketch is based on histories written by Ralph Nofziger, Vesta Nafziger and Bernice Rupp and personal research plus information in the Samuel Horst files which include the work of Guy F. Hershberger and John Umble. The following calendar has its sources in the last mentioned files and in personal research and conversation with older people (many now deceased); also in the church records some of which are lost at present.

Orland R. Grieser

WEST CLINTON CHURCH HISTORY

Calendar of events from first settlement to the present.

- 1834 Fulton County area opened for settlement.
 Aug. 23, first settlers arrive at Lauber Hill consisting of
 Christian Lauber, Jacob Kibler, Jacob Bender, John Van Gun-
 day and John George Meister families.
 Christian Rupp of the original two parties stays in Wayne Co.
 Fall, Christian Beck family arrives.
 Peter Stuckey buys farm on Bean Creek.
 David Stutzman, Christian Koenig and others buy land.
- 1835 Peter Wyse and Nicholas Koenig families arrive.
 Fall, first Amish preaching service in Christian Lauber cabin
 (20 x 24) in charge of Christian Beck.
- 1836 Daniel Short, Peter Short buy land west of Archbold.
 Smuckers and Burkholders arrive.
- 1837 Peter Nofzigers, John Rufenachts and Riegseckers arrive.
 Year of panic.
- 1838 Michel Griesers, Christian Rychener, a Reformed unmarried
 man, Sauders, Smuckers arrive.
- 1838 Year of great drought.
- 1840 Population of German Township, 452.
 Population of Clinton Township, 303.
 Baers, Stutzmans, Peter Short, Clopfensteins, Joel Smuckers
 and Joseph Shads arrive.
 Indians move out of area.
- 1841 First marriage in German Township, Christian Rychener and
 Magdaline Grieser by Christian Rupp.
- 1842 Jacob Freys settle in Clinton Township. (It seems that the
 trend of settlement was to south and east and to the west.)
- 1844 John Wyse arrives.
- 1846 Jacob F. Nofziger, the first wagon maker, arrives.
- 1848 John Nofziger arrives. Father of a greater majority of West
 Clinton members than any other.
- 1851 The Jacob Kings arrive.
- 1858 The Freyenbergers came from France. The majority of folks
 came from Alsace-Lorraine, Germany and Switzerland. (The
 early years were marked by long trips to the mill for sup-
 plies, marshy trails, hordes of mosquitoes, poor water, ague
 and malaria.)
- 1850 to
1860 This period is the time of big bank barns and more substan-
 tial houses.
- 1856 E. L. Frey born.
- 1858 John Holdeman comes into community, stressing new birth
 and experience.
- 1858 Eckley Cemetery property bought by Amish Church.

- 1865 There was a Reformed Mennonite Church by this year.
First subscriber to Herald of Truth (Christian Frey).
Jacob C. Frey born.
- 1866 Herald of Truth November lists eleven subscribers from this area.
Before the only books were the Amish prayer book, Martyrs Mirror, German Bible and the Ausband and a little later the Lieder-Sammlung song books.
- 1869 Central meeting house built.
Dec. 25, land deeded to Amish Church by Christian Rychener.
- 1870 Amish Diener-versammlung held in Christian Schantz barn.
- 1871 First SS with Jephtha Wyse and Jacob Nofziger as superintendents.
- 1872 No Sunday school because of opposition.
- 1874 Amish Church sends relief to Russian Mennonites.
- 1876 June 4-7, Diener-Versammlung held at Peter Schad home. Because the leaders of the church and the whole membership did not follow the Amish group which caused the discontinuance of this conference, we have no Old Order Amish Church in this community.
- 1881 Elias Frey and Christian Grieser appointed first lay Sunday school superintendents.
- 1884 Aug. 18, Elias L. Frey ordained third deacon in the Amish Mennonite Church.
- 1886 First addition to Central Church (to the west), pulpit and main door moved to north.
Aug. 18, more land deeded to Central Church by Christian Rychener.
- 1888 Aldrich lists Amish Church as having 265 members.
- 1889 More land bought because hitching rail and shed area was too small.
E. L. Frey uses term, "We have again opened our Sunday school." (Referring to close of same for winter).
John Miller buys place beside railroad.
- 1890 Bishop asks converts to destroy photographs before being baptized.
Time of road graveling.
- 1895 to 1900 From "Second Count of Mennonite" lists Central Church as follows:
Language, German-English
SS became year round in 1886
Central church seats 900
Value \$3,000.00
Six in the ministry
Members, 560
SS teachers and officers, 45
SS enrollment, 400 (estimated)

- 1890 to 1900 Large groups joining the church without evangelistic meetings.
- 1900 Evening meetings begin.
- 1902 or 03 Beginning of evangelistic meetings.
- 1903 Sewing circle organized.
- 1904 Bible readings held in the homes.
- 1905 Some couples were married without traditional cape and apron for the bride and Lotz hossa and muitza (Ger.) for the groom. Bible conferences follow closely after the start of the evangelistic meetings.
Regular evening meetings begin.
- 1907 Bishop Stuckey dies on Dec. 8.
- 1907 Dec. 8 to Mar. 22, there was no resident bishop. Most of the
- 1908 time from the first bishops there were two bishops in office. In this period at the yearly business meeting with Dan J. Wyse in charge, it was decided to build two new meeting houses, one to the east and one to the west. There had been a movement from the west end for a second meeting house. According to some because of opposition to it and to defeat the motion a rider was attached, namely, if there is to be one, there will be two, (one to the east, too). The vote was favorable.
- 1908 March 22, E. L. Frey was ordained bishop.
Summer, D. W. Nofziger built West Clinton church for \$2660.72.
Nov. 15, the first meeting was held in the new church, the funeral of Edith, daughter of Amos and Emmaline Fether Frey. She was born Sept. 28, 1892, died Nov. 13, 1908, M. S. Steiner preaching.
Aug. 23, Lockport dedicated.
SS quarterlies came into use.
- 1908 J. C. Frey and Conrad Britsch first SS superintendents.
Dec. 20-23, a Bible conference held with D. D. Miller and Daniel Kauffman as instructors. Is not known if this was the first one.
- 1910 May 10, S. D. Grieser ordained minister. J. C. Frey ordained deacon.
Forty-three baptized during the year.
- 1911 Sept. 5, Building committee appointed to bring plans for addition to Central.
Oct. 20, decided not to have recess for dinner during communion. No SS either.
- 1912 South wing, 40 x 20 built to Central.
- 1913 Seventy baptized by E. L. Frey.
- 1914 Jan. 15, decided that all morning meetings to begin at 9:30.
More land purchased to enlarge West Clinton yard.
Dec. 14, churches are becoming crowded.

- 1915 June 14, Lockport and Clinton authorized to install carbide lights.
Jan. 17, first meeting of West Clinton with Central independent of Lockport. The beginning of church and SS every Sunday at Central and Lockport and Clinton meeting with them on alternate Sundays. Evening meetings were on opposite Sundays.
- 1917 May 13, church issues stand on Conscription Act. Everyone required to register is to do so, to be strictly honest and obedient in everything required that is not contrary to the Word.
- 1918 Sept. 8, decide to solicit for War Sufferers' Relief.
- 1920 March 23, decide to remain neutral on appointment of delegate to Ohio Mission Board.
- 1921 May 28, Daniel Sauder, second deacon in church dies. About this time is the end of the every minister testimony after the sermon.
- 1922 Jan. 6, Lockport granted privilege to have services every Sunday.
- 1923 Feb. 11, a comprehensive discipline drawn up and approved by the church.
Probably the first year of Young Peoples' meetings at Clinton and Central. E. B. Frey, Aaron Frey and Henry Richer first program committee members.
- 1924 Sept. 7, decide to install electric lights at West Clinton.
- 1925 May 1, Dan J. Wyse, minister, dies.
Dec. 13, E. B. Frey ordained minister.
S. S. Wyse ordained deacon.
- 1926 West Clinton begins to hold meetings every Sunday.
- 1927 Elect separate treasurers for Central and West Clinton.
- 1929 Churches adopt New Church Hymnal.
- 1930 May 20, decide to remodel and enlarge Lockport.
- 1931 Membership of A. Mennonite Church 1081.
April 11, Communion at Lockport, probably the first one not held at Central.
- 1932 Henry L. Rupp serves last term as janitor.
- 1933 170 enrolled at Central Bible school.
April 16, 118 baptized by E. L. Frey at all three churches.
Oct. 29, E. B. Frey ordained bishop; S. S. Wyse ordained minister; Henry Wyse ordained deacon.
- 1934 Total expenses for Clinton \$111.14.
- 1935 Feb. 3, decide to enlarge and remodel West Clinton.
June 23, last meeting in original meeting house.
Oct. 27, first meeting in remodeled building. Communion in forenoon with Ray Yoder preaching. Dedication service in afternoon with Ray Yoder, Oscar Hostetler and S. E. Ailgyer.
Nov. 3, first SS in new building.
Nov. 24, Peter H. Short first funeral in newly remodeled church.

- 1936 New Central Church built.
 Oct. 4, last meeting in old Central Church.
 Dec. 6, Jesse Short ordained minister at Central. P. L. Frey
 ordained deacon at Central.
 Loudspeaker installed at West Clinton.
- 1938 March 2, S. D. Grieser dies.
 Nov. 6, Walter Stuckey, Simon Stuckey and Henry Wyse or-
 dained to ministry at Central.
 Fall, Vesta Nafziger leaves for India Mission Field.
- 1939 Jan. 17, Eli Rupp dies.
 June 12, S. S. Wyse dies.
- 1939 Oct. 2, Mission committee appointed to work on organizing a
 mission Sunday school.
- 1940 August, David Alwine moved into community to begin work
 among the Spanish migrants.
 Oct. 19, Henry Rychener dies.
- 1941 Membership at all the churches, 1352.
 Vesta Nafziger Miller supported by West Clinton continuously
 since serving on the mission field.
- 1941 Assignment of young men to C.P.S. begins.
- 1942 May 20, E. L. Frey dies.
- 1943 March, plan to ordain deacon at all three places carries by
 unanimous vote.
 Aug. 29, David Alwine holds last meeting with Mexicans in
 northwestern Ohio.
 Nov. 3, motion to start work in Toledo following report of
 mission committee. No definite plan for choosing workers.
 Dec. 5, Wyse Graber ordained deacon at and for Lockport.
 May 21, Roy Sauder ordained deacon at Central.
- 1944 Jan. 9, Olen Nofziger ordained deacon at West Clinton.
 March 8, Harvey Smucker chosen to start work in Toledo.
 Mar. 27, members meeting, decide to vote by ballot at all three
 churches on the matter of dividing into three separate con-
 gregations. There is no official record of the result of the vote.
 June 1, William Flory to continue Mexican work.
 Aug. 18, Jacob C. Frey dies.
 Aug. 23, Mission committee decides to proceed with Bancroft
 work.
 Oct. 22, Dan L. Sommers installed minister at West Clinton.
- 1945 Jan. 1, first yearly business meeting of the West Clinton
 Mennonite Church as a separate congregation.
- 1945 Jan. 21, first Sunday school held in West Bancroft area west
 of Toledo, 40 present.
 April 23, Joint Missions Comm. of three churches meet out
 of which develops the Holland work sponsored by the West
 Clinton congregation.
 May, first workers appointed for Holland Mission.

- June, first Bible school at Bancroft.
- July, agreement with Springfield Township Trustees for use of the Cemetery Chapel.
- July 22, first meeting at Holland with 61 present.
- July 31, three churches decide to build a church at West Bancroft.
- August, basement dug.
- West Clinton starts prayer meeting.
- 1946 Jan. 13, first meeting in the auditorium of the West Bancroft Mennonite Church, E. B. Frey in charge.
- May 11, first baptismal service at Holland Church.
- Returning of the C.P.S. men.
- Dec. 15, Frank Sturpe speaks at evening meeting.
- Interest in Jewish people started.
- 1947 Jan. 26, Olen Nofziger ordained minister.
- Mar. 16, S. Paul Miller family at West Clinton on first furlough from India Mission field.
- June 22, Elden Merillat ordained deacon.
- Mission work among the Jews of Toledo started.
- 1948 Membership at West Clinton, 413.
- Mar. 15, Missions Committee with some of the ministry investigate ways and means of helping the Mt. Pleasant congregation, near Continental, O. As a result of this visit two families have been appointed to this work.
- 1949 Sept. 11, Carl Beck ordained minister for the Japan Mission field.
- 1950 Jan 29, Raymond Richer ordained minister for the Holland work.
- 1951 Carl Beck helps to pioneer the Mennonite Mission in Hokkaido, Japan.
- 1953 June 1, West Clinton appoints finance committee.
- Jan. 16, decide to redecorate interior, refinish floor and carpet aisles of auditorium at West Clinton. Membership, West Clinton, 434.
- 1954 Brunk Bros. Revival team holds tent meetings in area north of Pettisville.
- 1954 Feb. 14, new plan for financing local church expenses adopted. Publishing of wedding banns discontinued with the coming of the church bulletin.
- Dec. 24, Carl Beck returns to U. S. on furlough.
- 1955 Mar. 17, Holland membership, 38.
- Mar. 7, proposition to do something about the crowded conditions fails to carry by the stipulated 75% voted. Later carried when revote was taken.
- Sept. 5, well and basement digging started at North Clinton.
- Oct. 5 & 6, footer poured at North Clinton.

- 1956 Jan. 22, farewell service for Carl Becks prior to leaving for second term in Japan.
April 18, roof trusses placed at North Clinton.
- 1957 Jan. 12, West Clinton decides to become a co-sponsor of the Defiance Spanish work.
Jan. 27, first service held at North Clinton with provisional officers in charge.
Feb. 3, first evening meeting at North Clinton with West Clinton closed.
July 24, vote by churches in community on support of Spanish broadcast over WONW, Defiance.
Sept. 12, M.Y.F. begins to hold paper meetings in basement of the church.
Sept., third family of regular workers chosen for Continental.
Oct., meeting to decide who is to have pastoral oversight at North Clinton.
Nov., second meeting on the above question. Matter left to ministry to decide the trend of the voting.
Dec. 27, Olen Nofziger to have pastoral oversight at North Clinton.
Statement made relative to placing of membership at North Clinton.
- 1958 Jan. 1, joint business meeting to finish business matters before becoming two congregations.
Holland practically declared a separate congregation by placing of membership there.
- 1958 Jan. 8, election of officers at North Clinton in effecting a church organization. All officers with unexpired terms retaining them.
West Clinton continues to sponsor the Holland work through a separate membership.
March 27, vote favorable to provide more help in the ministry by a large majority.
April 27, William Nofziger, seminary student at Goshen Biblical Seminary, but from the local church, was ordained minister.
Oct. 5, fiftieth anniversary at West Clinton with J. Irvin Lehman, Chambersburg, Pa., D. A. Yoder, Elkhart, Ind. and Simon Gingerich, Wayland, Iowa, as guest speakers.

APPENDIX

MINISTRY OF THE FULTON COUNTY CHURCH UP TO 1943

D—Deacon	M—Minister	B—Bishop	***—Date Unknown	
NAME		DATE ORDAINED	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH
Christian Beck	M	ordained in Switzerland	Nov. 12, 1798	Jan. 25, 1882
Christian Rupp	M	***		after 1848
	B	about 1841		
Peter Wyse	M	***	July 12, 1800	Dec. 12, 1856
	B	***		
Peter Nofziger	M	***	Sept 27, 1809	Sept. 6, 1877
	B	***		
Nicholas King	M	1844	Mar. 8, 1814	Dec. 6, 1896
	B	1871		
Jacob Nofziger	M	***	Mar. 6, 1815	Mar 14, 1882
Christian Fryenberger	M	1872		Jul. 23, 1910
Christian Stuckey	M	May 13, 1872	Aug 21, 1841	Dec. 8, 1907
	B	Nov. 4, 1896		
Jeptha Wyse	M	1866	Aug 23, 1839	Nov 27, 1887
John Wyse	D	***	Dec. 11, 1821	Apr. 9, 1884
E. L. Frey	D	Dec. 25, 1884	Nov. 2, 1856	Mar 20, 1942
	B	Mar. 22, 1908		
Daniel Wyse	M	May 20, 1888	Aug 28, 1847	Mar 17, 1925
Henry Rychener	M	1893	Nov. 2, 1855	Oct. 19, 1940
		installed 1899		
S. D. Grieser	M	May 10, 1910	June 10, 1874	Mar. 2, 1938
J. C. Frey	D	May 10, 1910	Sept 12, 1865	Aug 18, 1944
Daniel Sauder	D	June 21, 1881	May 24, 1851	Nov 28, 1921
Elias Rupp	M	installed	Sept. 1, 1860	Jan 17, 1939
		Dec. 27, 1918		
Sam Wyse	D	Dec. 13, 1925	Aug. 9, 1869	June 12, 1939
	M	Oct. 29, 1933		
E. B. Frey	M	Dec. 13, 1925		
	B	Oct. 29, 1933		
Henry Wyse	D	Oct. 29, 1933		
	M	Nov. 6, 1938		
	B	Sept. 10, 1950		
Jesse Short	M	Dec. 6, 1936		
Phil Frey	D	Dec. 6, 1936		
Walter Stuckey	M	Nov. 6, 1938		
	B	Jan. 1951		
Simon Stuckey	M	Nov. 6, 1938		

MINISTRY OF CLINTON TO 1958

Olen Nofziger	D	Jan. 9, 1944
	M	Jan. 26, 1947
Dan Sommers	installed M	Oct. 22, 1944
Elden Merrillat	D	June 22, 1947
Carl Beck (Japan)	M	Sept. 11, 1949
Raymond Richer	M	Jan. 29, 1950
William Nofziger	M	April 27, 1958



Central Amish Mennonite Meeting House

From north — original meeting house to the left of porch 1869 to
1886 or 1887 — as picture from 1886 to 1936



Central from east showing 1912 addition



West Clinton Mennonite Church

From Southeast

1908 to 1935



West Clinton Mennonite Church

1935 to 1958



West Bancroft Mennonite Church
Under joint supervision of three older churches
1946 to 1958



North Clinton Mennonite Church
1956 to 1958
Became separate congregation 1958

10/12/2012

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